

# Defying Gods and Angels

by Follower38

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Summary: HEAVY SPOILER ALERT The Librarian intended for her husband to use the domain and time to meditate on his action and eventually assist Humanity in reclaiming the Mantle. But with the loss of the Domain, so did her plan. Yet, what if it survived. Defying all odds and logic, the Domain held on to life. And now, everything shall change, yet again.

## 1. Prologue

### Defying Gods and Angels

A/N: More of a one-shot then another story. If someone wants to take this over, please tell me so I can read it too.

WARNING

HEAVY SPOILERS

Spoilers for Halo 4 and The Forerunner Series of Novels.

Synopsis: The Ur-Didact, the First Didact, was betrayed by his wife, the Librarian, during his increasingly vindictive efforts to combat the Flood, turning his own warriors and then Humans into the mechanical Promethean Warriors. Locked away in his cryptum within his own personal Shield World of Requiem, alive. Intended to have total access to the Domain, the entirety of all Forerunner knowledge, and meditate upon his actions. And upon the arrival of the Reclaimers on his world, ensuring that Humanity's rise and taking responsibility of the Mantle of Responsibility.

But the plan soured, the very thing that the Didact created to destroy the Flood, would also destroy his wife's plan. Annihilating both all life and Flood in the galaxy and all Precursor technology: including The Domain itself.

Yet, what if it had survived?

Defying all odds, the Domain endured.

And now, history, takes a different course.

Shield World

Requiem

Inner Core

June 15, 2561

Naval Master Chief Petty Officer John/Sierra-117 ran, sprinting for the two waist-high pillars in front of him even as Cortana urged him on, intent on keeping the UNSC Infinity ship outside of the planet. Placing his hands on them as Cortana tells him to, he idly marks the Reclaimer symbol imprinted on them.

Returning to the task at hand, he opens up a comm. channel to Infinity, hoping whatever technology was here would amplify his signal. "Infinity! This is Sierra 117 of the UNSC Forward Unto Dawn. Do you copy?" A faint rumble echoed through the floor followed by his message, garbled. Without warning, the massive sphere in the center of the room begins to rise. The weapons fire around the chamber cease as all are focused on the phenomenon in front of them.

"Chief, something's wrong." He doesn't hear her, all his attention focused on the sphere in front of him. It is, familiar. Like when he was on Installation 04 and he instinctively knew how to engage the Hardlight Bridge and the Silent Cartographer. "Chief, let go of the contacts." He doesn't listen, only watch the sphere begin to spin slowly. "JOHN!"

He all but jumps away from the pillars, drawing his BR55HB SR 'Battle Rifle'. Seeing for the first time all the Covenant and Promethean warriors standing stock still and watching the satellite, he begins walking backwards. "Finds us an exit." The sphere begins to stop its slow spin. "Now."

"Don't need to wait around for me!" Taking the cue, he leaps from the platform, still well away from the combatants below, taking cover beneath a chest-high wall. A half-second later, a sonic-blast sounds through the room, anything not behind a wall or magnetically attached to the floor is thrown to it.

A platform descends from the bottom of the sphere, the spokes upright around it, descending in a petal-pattern. On it kneels a single massive individual, even from a distance one can see massive amount of muscle upon them.

It rises, flexing its shoulders and its arms. Beckoned, plates of metal emerge from the base of the platform, attaching themselves or hanging in place around the figure. Lines around the armor glow orange as energy courses through it. "So long has it been, and so much has been squandered."

The Ur-Didact looks upon his Promethean warriors, ignoring the beasts around them. "Only now after so long, do I see what you saw my love.

They truly were, no are, our equals," he turned; looking upon every Promethean in the room, and seeing all the lesser species bow before him. "You took my warriors for your own, and now I shall follow them." He waved his hand, and pulse of energy shook the room. What once coursed with orange and red, the colors he had taken once his hatred of humanity returned, faded. Being replaced by the softer blue hue the Librarian had used all her life.

"So fades the hubris of the past, and yet, it seems these beasts do not recognize what you truly are, human." He sweeps his hand, the low wall John was hiding behind disappearing in a flicker of hard light petals. He rises, drawing his rifle and targeting the Didact. "Hold your fire human, we may have been enemies once, lifetimes ago, but now we are not. The Forerunners have returned, and no, so will Humanity."

## 2. Chapter 1

### Defying Gods and Angels

A/N: Wow. I, uh, didn't expect the result I got for the prologue of this story. Really it was just a plot idea I had but no real intention of following up on. But you people who faved, subscribed and reviewed this story, and those who sent me a private message urging me to continue, thank you. I will try my best to continue this story but chances are it will be like other stories with very interment updates.

I ask all of you who read to please review. More reviews urge me to write.

### Chapter 1

For a moment, all of time and space seemed to halt in place as human and forerunner looked upon each other, the first encounter in more than a hundred millennia. Master Chief Petty Officer of the UNSC Navy John/Sierra-117 watched the forerunner warrior down the scope of his BR55HB "Battle Rifle", his finger near the trigger but not quite on it. He had no real reason to not trust the forerunner. He may have been alien, but he wasn't Covenant, and by all records the forerunners had saved them all from the Flood. But something in the back of his, something ancient, but not primal told him that this forerunner was a threat to humanity, that meant his enemy. It was the same feeling he had when dealing with Covenant or Forerunner technology. Instinctively knowing how to operate them without any level of training, everything from Covenant Ghosts and Banshees to Forerunner weaponry. A trait shared amongst his Spartan-II brothers and sisters. The crosshairs on his HUD hovering directly over the Didact's head. Still he didn't fire, trusting his brain over his instinct.

If the Didact knew of this, he made no move to show it. His armor had re-engaged but his helmet had yet to appear. Watching the Spartan-II super-soldier impassively. "So, even in death, my wife has provided humanity with the knowledge to rise again. I have seen your actions, \_Spartan," \_saying the unfamiliar word with difficulty. "and am impressed."

John made no move to stand down. "You have every right to kill me,

but I have no desire to join my wife in the Great Journey quite yet." The Didact was sheathed in blue light, the same light when the Prometheans used their teleportation abilities. One moment he was upon the platform and the next he was, John spun, only to have the barrel of his rifle clank against the much taller Didact's armor. "Lower your weapon warrior-servant. We have much to discuss." A moment later, both were wrapped in the same blue light and vanished. Leaving only Prometheans and Storm Covenant in the Cryptum.

In an empty chamber, two rings of blue light appeared and expanded before releasing their passengers and fading away. The Didact and the Spartan were in the same position as before their teleportation. This time the Spartan didn't hesitate, firing a burst at the Didact's head. Even as he pulled the trigger, the firing pin swinging forward and striking the primer, igniting the powder within, the gases expanding rapidly and sending the bullet forward, the Didact's helm reacted, slamming itself closed around its master's head, just in time for the first round to leave the barrel, the gases behind it slotting another round and readying another round. All this happened in milliseconds and John found himself looking upon a shimmer blue-hued energy shield. "Admirable effort \_Spartan, \_but pointless. I am not your enemy."

John didn't move, least not until he heard Cortana speak. "John, I think he's telling us the truth. From what just happened, the Didact, that's what I heard those Elites call him, could have already killed us if he wanted."

The Spartan shut off his external speakers, "Are you sure?"

"As sure as I can be. It's a gut instinct." The Spartan didn't trust this 'Didact' but he trusted Cortana, even as she was entering 'rampancy'. She was still fighting it, and never gave him any reason to distrust her.

John nodded, "Then why have your sentinels been attacking me?" He questioned even as he lowered his rifle.

"I do not have the answer to that, but I believe my wife, you may know her as the Librarian, ensured that my Prometheans would stop all that would try to interrupt my meditation. And when Humanity finally came, they would serve as your trial by fire. So that only once you were ready for Ascension, you would reach me." Here the Didact turned and moved towards a hovering set of rings that the Spartan had not noticed earlier. "I will admit, Humanity, even as primitive as you are, you have come far during your Second Ascension. You especially \_Spartan, \_not since the Lord of Admirals has any human gained my respect." He waved his hand and a hardlight interface appeared before him.

"You stopped the Flood when these \_beasts, \_" referring to the Covenant, they left behind, "released them. You stopped one of our Ancilla from destroying my wife's work in his madness, and though I mourn the loss of the Ark and ancilla, you have my gratitude. Better to destroy what can be remade, then lose what can not." The interface, which was a cool blue, flashed red. "I see, so you really did intend for them to reclaim our legacy." He turned to face the Spartan. "Come hither, it seems whatever my wife left behind, it requires a human touch. A Reclaimer's touch."

Cortana's voice filled his helmet again. "John, if the Librarian something behind, we need to see what it is."

"We need to get you back to Halsey." John countered.

"John, if the Forerunners could create something like Spark, and he didn't go rampant for millennia, they might be able to help me."

However much the Spartan may not have wanted to, he couldn't deny Cortana's logic. Stepping forward he asked, "What do I need to do?"

The Didact simply stepped aside. "I think, you already know." Granted access to the interface, John stepped towards it, and realized the Didact was right. He didn't know how, nor could even ready the characters on it, but he knew what to do. He swiped his above it, feeling for the key and simply, tapped the right one.

Now the within the rings a blaze of white energy erupted, but neither human or forerunner stepped back, simply gazing upon it. Finally, the Didact broke the silence, "Come human, if this is what I believe it to be, there is someone you must meet. And a reunion long overdue." With that the Didact stepped forth into the blaze, and the Spartan followed soon after.

A/N: Alright, let me know what you guys think. Depending on the feedback, reviews, favs and follows, I may continue this.

### 3. Chapter 2

#### Defying Gods and Angels

A/N: Thanks guys, for all the favs and reviews. Convinced me to work on this chapter the day I released the Chapter 1. Relabeled the first page as the Prologue. And I think you people will be intrigued by how I decide to go with the story.

Warning: Many spoilers for Halo 4, the Terminals and the Forerunner series

Also, this is unbetaed and unedited. Please let me know what you think.

Review please!

#### Chapter 2

"Once, we were one great race, united in power and concerted in our goals..."

â€œForthencho reminiscing humanity's age of flourish.

**\*\*UNSC Infinity\*\***

**\*\*Bridge\*\***

0137 military time(1:37 am civilian Time)

"Roland, ETA to slipspace exfil?" Commander Tom Lasky asked as he rubbed his eyes with his fingers.

A yellow-hued hologram of a World War II American bomber crewman appeared. "About 5 hours sirs. Advance scanners have picked up something."

Tom didn't react, simply asking. "Any ideas what it is?" The Great War was since long over. The Covenant separatists, the majority of them, having returned to their homeworld, such as the Sangheilli, Unggoy, Kig-Yar and Yan'mme. Whilst others had simply disappeared such as the San'Shyuum and the Jirhlhannae, whilst others had come to Earth and Sanghelios, such as the Hurgarok and various members of the Unggoy and Kig-yar.

"Looks to be a fleet of ships and an unknown structure."

"Insurrectionists?" Lasky asked. Even with the devastation of the major of the Outer and Inner Colonies, along with the loss of the Rubble, the connected ring of asteroids in former Outer Colony territory, the Insurrection was assumed to have been all but destroyed. Approximately six months after the Battle of the Ark, which many simply called BoA, the Insurrection had attacked the fleet stationed over a reclaimed Reach, possessing a ragtag fleet of patched up and modified civilian, modern and outdated UNSC warships, those of unknown designs and even several Covenant ships, including a single CCS-class cruiser. Despite how patchwork the fleet appeared, it was more than enough to take on the Reach fleet and had hijacked several of them before leaving.

"Negative, profiles match Covenant ships, mostly cruisers and some frigates. Not signs of any carriers."

"The Arbiter's?" He asked. Despite whatever command the Arbiter had, many of the Sangheilli clans operated independently. Actively hunting for the Covenant loyalists.

"Does it really matter?" Both man and AI turned to the new voice, "If the hingeheads are here that just means there's something good here."

"Commander Palmer, so what brings you the graveyard?" Lasky inquired.

"Nothing much, couldn't sleep. But like I said, does it really matter what the split-lips are here for? Between my Spartans and the Infinity, it's not like there's much that can take us on." She smirked, the Spartan-IV commander was regarded as confident, borderline arrogant in her and her Spartan abilities.

"Still. Roland?"

"Unknown sir. Scanner's aren't picking up any IFF tags. But several profiles match known Storm Covenant vessels."

"Storm?" Palmer gritted her teeth. The Storm covenant were an Separatist branch of the Arbiter's people. Sangheilli, Unggoy, Kig-yar and Mglekgolo who still believed in the Forerunners as gods but not the Great Journey as interpreted by the San'Shyuum. And

believed that humanity was a scourge to be exterminated.

Lasky just frowned, "What about the structure, do we at least know what it's made of?"

"Not really, but judging by how the potential Storm Fleet is hovering around it and isn't glassing it, I think it's safe to say that's it's Forerunner."

"Right, I guess we'll know soon. Someone wake up the Captain, this mission just got complicated."

**\*\*Requiem\*\***

**\*\*Inner Core\*\***

**\*\*Unknown\*\***

As the pair regained their sight, they found themselves looking upon a pitchblack area. Before John could question what the Didact was doing, the area was lit up by a bright light, turning towards it, his hand twitched towards the M6-G pistol on his right hip. Least, until the woman appeared. She was not human, that was for sure, and her face and hands betrayed that fact. Before he could ask who this was, John heard the Didact whisper "Hello love, so long it has been, has it not?" His helmet had retracted a soft smile now graced his face, taking away the ferocity his features possessed. John noticed a tear in the corner of the Didact's eye.

The now identified Librarian gave a soft smile. "Hello my husband. It has been a long time." She came down, closer to them before pausing directly before her husband.

"Too long." The Didact agreed. "I realize that you are but the essence of her. Still, I thank you, my wife, for what you did. I admit, at the time I was incensed, enraged at your betrayal." He breathed deeply. "But now my meditation is complete. I see that you were not only saving the humans, but me. I now shudder to think what may have happened if you had not stopped me, or if the Domain had been destroyed."

"I am glad to hear my husband. I feared the activation of your halos would have shattered your meditation, with the loss of the Domain, but fortune has favored us."

The Didact did not lose his smile, "The halos may have been of my design but were the decision of the Master Builder and Bornstellar to use them. You would do well to remember that, love." The reproach held no real malice, merely banter between husband and wife. "I wish you could truly be her with me love. And see just how far yo\_our\_ children have come." Despite her smile not changing in the slightest, it seemed as those the Librarian's happiness grew tenfold. The Didact not only accepted but embraced her views of humanity. The Librarian reached out to caress her husband's face only for it to pass through him.

"As do I, my love. But, there are other matters to tend to."

The Didact nodded. "Agreed." He turned to Spartan-II. "You were right, my wife. These humans, they are truly worthy of being out

inheritors. I have seen his actions through the Domain. "They have endured so many trials and tribulations, sacrificed much, and lost even more and yet they persevered. I have seen their worth. And one who stands before you, has done what only one other human has done. He has earned my respect."

The Librarian approached the Spartan. Unlike before with the Didact, there was nothing in the back of his mind that said the Librarian was a threat, an enemy. But it did not say she is an ally, a friend. But remained silent. "And I see why." She whispered to her husband before directing her attention to the supersoldier. "Greetings John, I am overjoyed to see, that my plan has borne fruit."

"I should have known. You would not leave our inheritors without the potential to be our inheritors." The Didact mused.

"My husband is correct. Your physical evolution, your combat skin, and many others that have yet to be realized."

"Your people were once our greatest enemy, the first threat we ever encountered that could and would, truly challenge us." The Librarian reached forward, and touched the Spartan's armor through his shields. John's eyes widened as millennia of lost history surged through his mind. "When we first encountered your race, humanity was expanding with a desperate violence across the stars. Alongside your allies, the San'Shyuum, those you know as the Prophets, marched into Forerunner territory. Expanding your own world by world."

"And I would rise to meet them." The Didact's voice taking over. "It would take years but I and my Warrior-servants halted your advance. We did not realize why you fought, why you burned our worlds and ships. And we finally did, humanity had lost, and we were weakened."

The scenes changed as the Didact and the Librarian altered in their narration.

The Librarian spoke again. "We did not realize you were not attacking us, that we were not your true enemy. It was only after the war's end, did we realize that you had not been expanding, but had been running. From the enemy that you had fought and we had been ignorant of. The Flood."

"We realized too late that you had been acting as caretakers of the Galaxy, much like we were. Purging the parasite wherever it appeared. And you had bested it."

"And when the parasite returned, we were the only ones able to fight them. We lost our worlds by the score, and whatever you may have done to beat them, was forever lost. I will tell you what I told Forthencho, 'Know this, relentless enemy, killer of our children, Lord of Admirals: soon we will face the enemy you have faced... And we are afraid.'"

"We knew our people would lose the war. My husband still held onto the hope that he could stop the Flood with his Prometheans. And he may have succeeded but the price would have been too great."

"Indeed, this will be explained later you \_Spartan\_."



"I made plans for humanity, both to become our inheritors, the Reclaimers of our legacy, and should the parasite ever return."

John didn't know what the Librarian was saying, but before he could ask, the Librarian elaborated. "When I indexed mankind for repopulation after the Halo's, I planted seeds amongst your people. Seeds that would lead to an eventuality: you." Reality returned as the surge of ancient memories, seeded directly into his DNA, ceased. John shook his head to clear the lingering traces of the memories before returning his attention to the two Forerunners before him.

The pieces began to snap into place in the Spartan's mind. "You're the reason why I, why the Spartans know how to use your technology. On Halo, I knew how to activate the Cartographer, here I knew how to use your weapons." A hand twitched towards the Promethean Light Rifle on his back, "That was you wasn't it?"

"Yes, it was. The gene-song within you contains still many gifts. But they are locked away. Still, there is one that I would unlock." The Librarian reached towards John but he stepped back. The Librarian pulled away, puzzled. "Why do you step away Reclaimer?"

"Thereâ€¦" he paused, wondering if he should reveal Cortana to them. By all signs they were totally unaware of her. If he told them of her, would they help her, them? Or would they destroy her?

Cortana's voice filled his helm again. "John, it's alright. Tell them." His unspoken question answered he stepped forward again.

"You called Guilty Spark, an ancilla. I assume that is what you called your Artificial Intelligences?"

"Indeed they are." It was the Didact who answered. "They were an integral part of our people, our war against the Flood or humanity would have been far worse without their aid. Why do you ask Spartan?"

The Spartan didn't have a chance to answer, his external speakers were activated without his command. Except it was his voice, it was Cortana's. "He's asking for me. UNSC 'Smart' AI, CTN 0452-9, my name is Cortana."

The Didact was first to speak. "An ancilla, and I see your influence my wife."

The Librarian nodded. "You are correct, my husband."

The Ur-Didact extended his hand, "May we see her?" As John tightened his grip on his rifle, he took a step back. "You need not worry, warrior-servant of man. You have my, our word, that no harm shall come to her." Still he didn't move, instead shouldering the rifle.

"Perhaps my husband, this would be more comfortable for them." From the floor, made from hardlight particles, a platform appeared, much like the others he had inserted Cortana into earlier. John stepped towards it, rifle still in hand, pulling the data chip from his skull and inserting it into the platform. A moment later, a blue hologram

of a woman appeared. "And what can we help you with my dear?"

Cortana played with her hands, the code that made up her body rapidly moving, a sign of her nervousness. "I, I need help."

### **\*\*Defying Gods and Angels\*\***

As this occurred, on the other side of Requiem, on board a CAS-Class Assault Carrier, The Unyielding Belief, a Sangheilli Field Master approached his commander. Taking a knee the Field master addressed his commander. "My lord. We have found the Didact' keep butâ€|"

Jul 'Mdama, the leader of the Storm Covenant, or the Covenant Remnant did not turn to face his Field Master, instead watching the hologram of Requiem before him. "but?..."

The Field did not respond for a moment instead bowing lower. "My lord! The Didact himself appeared before us! But he abandoned us! The Demon was there also and the Didact took the Demon with him!" The Field Master spoke as fast as he can before taking a breath and continuing. "After the Didact's leave, the Guardians attacked us! I was the only one to make it out alive!. Forgive me for my failure! I offer my life to you for this disgrace." The Field Master's chest heaved slightly, both from his rapid speech and his own nervousness.

The Didact's Hand did not respond, still looking upon the image of Requiem. Finally, after what felt like an eon and a hour to the Field Master, Jul turned to face the him. The Commander of the Covenant Remnant looked at his Fleet Master. The veteran Sangeheilli warrior was missing his left arm and his right was badly injured. Blood still dripped from the wound where the arm once was. His armor was scorched and pocket-marked by weapons fire, even now a small trail of smoke emanated from it. His helmet was gone, though by the scar on the Field Master's head, it was not by choice. "Rise my brother. You say that the Didact took the Demon with him? What else happened?"

The Field Master rose. "My lord. The Didact spoke with the Demon, we all heard the God. But he did not attempt to kill the Demon but, My lord! The Didact addressed the Demon as though they were equals!" 'Mdama stilled at the Field Master's words.

"Tell me, just what equal did our god say?" The Field Master recited the words exactly as he had heard them "Is there anyone else that knows of this?" The Field Master answered in the negative. "Good" Then, before either of them could blink, 'Mdama activated his energy sword and lopped off the Field Master's head. It flew the air, hitting the ground and rolling towards the door. "This, is not right. The humans are not the inheritor. Their destruction, is the will of the gods, and we, are their instrument."

## 4. Chapter 3

### Defying Gods and Angels

A/N: Forgot to mention, the scene aboard Infinity, was at least ten hours before the events of the first chapter. Sorry about the confusion.

Also, please let me know what you think of this chapter. Taking quite a risk with a few ideas this chapter. Want to see if they pan out with you guys and girls out there. I have a few alternative ideas but let me know what you guys think. If need be, I'll take this down and post an alternative chapter. If anyone has any suggestions, PM me. Also, don't remember who, but to one of the reviewers out there, I'm a guy.

### Chapter 3

"Many faiths claim that one day, their gods shall appear unto and before them, promising salvation and transcendence to all in one form or another. Yet, what does it mean, when the very deity you worship, shatters the very foundation of your beliefs?"

Professor Tanika Islow, on the topic of Forerunners and the Covenant Faith

**\*\*Requiem's Inner Core\*\***

For the first time since he had been on the Cairo, the Master Chief had exposed himself, outside of his armor. With the exception of the underlying bodysuit, virtually all of his armor components were removed. All of it, at the bequest of Cortana, who had disappeared with the Librarian several hours ago since their meeting.

To his left, Forerunner machines beyond his own comprehension and understanding, with sizes ranging from those barely bigger than the palm of his hand, to those that of the Sentinels of the Haloes but magnitudes more intricate. For every piece of his armor, a dozen drones worked tirelessly, using tendrils and mechanical appendages to interact with the armor. The last time John had seen just intricate behavior regarding machines had been his encounter with Covenant Engineers, or the Hurgarok as he later learned. Despite how Cortana had told him he could trust them, them being the Didact and The Librarian Shade, he kept a close on eye on his armor. Already he could see the vast changes being made to it. Dents, bullet holes, gashes, tears, plasma burns, carbon scoring and all other matter of battle damage had been repaired, the armor looking like when he had first donned it on Cairo Station over Earth.

Now though, despite the repairs, it looked nothing like what it once was. Now it had lines of Forerunner technology coursing through it. Veins of light and energy like those of the Didact's were now integrated into the MJOLNIR Mk. VI armor. That was the most obvious of changes. Even a Spartan's eyes could not see the minute details with which the Forerunner machines worked on the insides of MJOLNIR, but the Spartan could see enough that great changes were being made.

Before, he would have been ecstatic, or least as ecstatic a Spartan could become, at the prospect of his armor being integrated with Forerunner technologies. But John, was anything but overjoyed. Rather his thoughts were on Cortana, who had since going with the Librarian several hours ago, had yet to return. This time alone, the first time he could rest, truly rest, gave him time to think. Not since before he was inducted into the Spartan program, could he remember a time where there was not the next regime, the next lesson, the next mission, the next battle, waiting for him. For the first time, he

could reflect on all that occurred, his thoughts bouncing from what remained of his Spartan Brethren, what became of Earth, and what became of Halsey and Chief Mendez. Or as many of his brothers and sisters saw them, their mother and father. Yet, despite everything, it all eventually came back to her, Cortana.

He snapped out his thoughts as he felt the barest of tremors in the floor. Before the being even spoke, he knew who it was. "What troubles you Spartan? Is it your ancilla?" John didn't reply, still focusing on his armor. "Do not fret John. My Wife, though only a shade this one may be, is gifted in all forms of life. Be natural, or synthetic in origin. She will repair your ancilla's corruption."

With speed surprising even the Spartan he got to his feet, getting as close as to the Didact's face as he could. "SHE'S NOT CORRUPTED!" Human and Forerunner stared each other down, the Didact's hand reaching behind him, John's balled into fists. Finally, after what seemed to be the restart of an age-old conflict, the Spartan realized just what he had done and stepped away. "Iâ€¦apologize."

The Didact, his hand at his side once again, simply nodded. "Apology accepted Spartan. I must admit however, I am surprised at the loyalty you show your," he paused, nodding again as he resumed, "you show Cortana. I knew very few who treated their ancilla as companions, and fewer still, where both were loyal to the other, but only once, have I seen a bond such as yours." By now the Didact had stepped away from John, creating some space between them. "Just, what is she to you? Is she a tool, a friend, a sister, or somethingâ€¦more?"

John contemplated the thought, processing it. What was she to him, really? A tool? No, a weapon was a tool, a ship was a tool. Even his armor, which had become a second skin since the Mark IV, was still a tool. Valuable it may be, but still replaceable. A friend? No, they had long since passed the boundaries of simple friendship and comrades. What they had seen together, what they had fought together. The depths and lengths each went to preserve and protect the other. There was a bond between them yes, one that went beyond description, except for the pair. But was she something more? She was machine, and he was, what was he even anymore? A man, or a machine? He had been fighting for so long, with a concentrated goal in mind. With nothing left to strive for, what was left? In a rare moment of weakness, John bowed his head. "I don't know."

He did not say anymore, and there was no more that needed to be said. The Didact did not speak either. The moment he had laid eyes on the Spartan, he could tell of the warrior-servant's past. For he had once experienced the same. A warrior who knew nothing but battle and death, thrust into an era of peace. The transition, was never easy, not for veterans such as themselves. And it was worse for the Spartan; at the very least the Didact had a life to return to. Both himself and the Iso-Didact; the young manipular he had altered into an image himself, Bornstellar Makes Eternal Lasting. The Spartan, had nothing.

The Ur-Didact stepped away from the Spartan, instead watching the drones working on the primitive, yet surprisingly advanced combat skin. Considering how long since the beginning of mankind's Second Ascension, this level of technology should be out of their reach. Yet it was comparable to that worn by the humans during their First

Ascension, inferior though it was. The humans, how long since had he warred with them, and what he did to them? Both after their war and during the war against the Flood? 'Ah, perhaps, now is the time to speak to him about this.' The Didact mused, turning to face the Spartan once again. "Come human, I think it is time you have learned of your forgotten history once more."

### **\*\*Defying Gods and Angels\*\***

It had been ten hours since they had discovered the Forerunner world and the Storm Covenant fleet whilst still in slipspace. It had been four hours since they had exited slipspace and had given the Storm fleet one hell of a black eye when they had blasted apart several cruisers. And it had been two hours since the transmission that sounded as though it had come from someone claiming the callsign: Sierra-117.

Once they had entered the system, they had swatted aside the majority of the Storm covenant fleet near their exit location from slipspace. Once they had done so, they had tried to establish position in orbit above the artificial planet. Key word being tried. Once the Storm Covenant fleet had been beaten away, the Infinity had been caught in, for lack of a better term, a tractor beam and been dragged into the planet through the portal. The portal had crippled the Infinity; shutting down a litany of systems including shielding and many of their primary weapons and several secondary systems. Eventually crashing down inside of the artificial planet.

And since then, nothing. Absolutely nothing. Aside from the restarting of Infinity's various systems, there had been nothing. And all signs pointed to this world being similar at face value to what was now being called the Shield World of Onyx.

Fireteams of marines, ODS'Ts and Spartan-IVs had been sent out to both recon and patrol the area. Aside from the occasional group of Storm Covenant, both entire squads and individual scouts, there hadn't been much that occurred. The only real thing of note were the reports of several squads that had seen, to quote, "Some kind of glowing thing with a hump before it turned into a glowing tennis ball and disappeared."

Lasky was in his quarters, having been relieved from bridge duty once it was apparent that all was clear. He had just switched into more relaxed clothes when there was a beep from the AI terminal in his room. 'Great, just when I'm about to get some sleep.' He thought as he tapped the 'accept' button on the side, telling Roland it was okay to appear.

As the Smart-AI's avatar appeared, he had a grin on his face which quickly faded when he saw the Commander's less than formal state of dress. "Oh, sorry about that commander,"

Lasky waved him off, "It's alright Roland, what have you got for me?"

The AI nodded briskly. "Right, well there's been a development. One of the ODS'T squads on patrol found parts of a ship matching those of UNSC Charon-class light frigate, along with several crates and other miscellaneous items. However, there is something about what they found."

"And that would be?" He asked,

Roland's avatar simply smirked. "Serial numbers on several crates and weapons recovered matched those listed as having been stored the UNSC Forward Unto Dawn. It's not just a beacon sir, it's her." By the time Roland had finished his sentence, Lasky had finished donning his uniform and had bolted out the door, intent on finding out more.

**\*\*Defying Gods and Angels\*\***

Back within the core of Requiem, within its cyberspace, two AI, one a shade of her maker, worked on the other, a daughter of brilliance. Cortana, despite everything she had learned about Forerunners and their technology since her time in the Forerunner archives of Reach, was dumbfounded by what she saw in front of her. The Librarian was peeling away layers upon layers of her code, finding and correcting the rampancy spikes and fragmenting codes, all of it, while Cortana was still active enough to watch, a feat the human-made AI thought to be impossible.

The Librarian's hands moved with a deft swiftness only possible by those who had decades of experience and an intimate prior knowledge of similar coding. Without turning her attention from her work, the Librarian inquired, "So, ancilla, I am surprised." As though she could see Cortana's confused look, she elaborated, "I know ancilla Cortana, I have worked with both the natural and artificial worlds for centuries, though I always enjoyed working with the living than the synthetic. And I have never seen a relationship like between you and the Spartan."

Cortana felt her code rush through her, the AI equivaent, or least hers, of a blush, before she responded, "There is no relationship. We just watch out for each other. We always have. And I will for as long as I can."

The Librarian simply smiled, "My dear, I am several centuries old, so do not think me a fool." She chided, like a mother would their child, soft but firm. "I have seen my child grow old and find love before they died in war. I have seen the children of my friends do the same. And I have seen how you look at the Spartan. You maybe ancilla, but you behave more like a human than you realize. Now, tell me again, what is he to you?"

As Cortana processed the question, she recalled all the moments she had shared with the Spartan, all the times he had been at the forefront of her mind. From when she had first chosen him as her carrier for Operation Red Flag, to meeting him on Reach for the first time, to the Alpha Halo, on Installation 04, their first encounter with the Monitor, with the Flood. And what they did to stop it. The moments when their trust and bonds were first made and faith laid upon the other outside of Reach. And then the Delta Halo, where she had forced him to leave her behind, to keep an eye of the Flood, the In Amber Clad and should the Halo fire, destroy herself, High Charity and it along with her. He had made a promise to her that he would return.

And later on, on the Ark, Installation 00, when High Charity had arrived at the Ark. He knew she would still be onboard, he knew what

would be waiting for him: an army of Flood and the Gravemind. Yet he still came for her. She had rationalized it at the time as a necessity, that he only came for her because he needed the activation index to fire the replacement halo for Installation 04. That he had not come for her specifically. Despite how she felt when she realized that her John had come for. Wait, Her John?

Yes, her John, her Spartan. When she had started to consider him that she didn't recall. Her rampancy having already affected her, despite what the Librarian was doing now. But she smiled, yes, she consider him to be hers. "I don't know," She answered. " I don't know what we are anymore. Are we friends, family, loves? I don't know. All I know is this. He is not just a man. He is not just a Spartan. He is so much more. To those he fought for, he is a hero. To those he fought alongside, he is a savior and a warrior-god. To those that stood against him, he is a daemon and death-incarnate. But for all that. I don't know what he is to me anymore. I don't know if he's a friend. I don't know if he is something other. I don't know if I love him because I don't even know if an AI can love. All I know is this. He is MY Spartan, and I don't give a damn what comes our way, cause I will do everything I can to keep him safe. We promised to watch out for each other, and I will. And Heaven help whoever or whatever gets in our way."

"And if the price to save him would be your very existence? All that you are? Would you surrender it?"

Cortana didn't even hesitate in her answer. "Without question."

The Librarian, in all this time, had not ceased or even slowed in her work. If anything her work had accelerated. But as Cortana finished her declaration, she stopped. "I...have never heard of any ancilla speak in such way. Not in my many years nor have I ever heard of such a bond from the Domain." Resuming her work, she continued, "The reason I asked you ancilla is I needed to see if you could be trusted with the information that I know you so desire." Before Cortana could object, she pressed on. "Do not think to deny it. All ancilla desire information. It is their food, it is their addiction. They need it, they desire it, they crave it. And I have no reason to think you any different. You have proven your trust, in such a way I never expected. So ask, and I shall answer."

**\*\*Defying Gods and Angels\*\***

The Ur-Didact had led the Spartan away from where the latter had left behind his armor. Taking him deeper into the maze-like corridors and pathways before finally entering a room, its walls curving inwards like the inside of a sphere, its center dominated by a hovering sphere. "Where are we? Why are we here?" John asked, seeing no real discernable purpose of the room.

"There is much that you must learn Spartan." The Didact moved towards the hovering sphere before placing a hand upon it. Instantly, the walls were alight with images. Images of, to the Didact, battles long past and worlds since burned. To the Spartan, they were a piece of history he never knew existed. "It's time you were told the full extent of your history."

## Defying Gods and Angels

"People have asked me, 'do you miss it?' Do I miss being a Spartan? No, because you never stop being a Spartan. But I do miss my Spartan brothers and sisters. Sometimes, I wish I could be there with them. But do I ever regret leaving? No I don't. Otherwise, I would never found him, and my little angel wouldn't be here."

-Interview with Maria Salinger nee 062, three years after BoA, on her post-military life

WARNING: HEAVY SPOILERS

### Chapter 4

The Spartan simply looked towards the Didact at his answer. "What do you mean, the full extent?" Ignoring the changing images around him that were projected on the walls.

"As we told you before, humanity was once our equal. The only species in the galaxy that could match the Forerunners." The images on the walls changed, showing ancient humans from their First Ascension. Images that had been stolen or claimed from Human drives long ago. "That, was not entirely true. Both our races were birthed by another. One greater than either of us. They were known to us as the Precursors. They were the ones who made us in the beginning."

"You think the Forerunners are powerful for being able to create entire worlds and the Halos. But the Precursors overshadowed us all. But that, is a tale for another time. The Didact moved his hand over the sphere, changing the images yet again. We have told you of our War with your people, and of their conflict with the Flood. But we did not tell you everything. Once the war had ended, with the surrender of your people on the world of Charum Hakkor, we imposed a sentence on your people for the actions you had committed during the War. What we saw then as crimes against the Mantle and life, when in reality you were protecting it against the Flood. Our sentence was to return to a more primitive state. My sentence was to do so."

Again the images changed, going from a technologically advanced and powerful humanity, to those of primitive hunter-gatherer tribes. Animal skins and wooden huts, stone tools and simple lives. The Spartan, despite the stoic look on his face, was dumbfounded. The fact that humanity was once on a level that equaled or possibly exceeded the Forerunners, what he once thought to be the most powerful race to ever exist, only now just set in. Let alone that both had been artificially made to a degree but an even more powerful race. The Spartan didn't say anything, but the Didact could clearly read the unspoken questions in the Spartan's eyes.

"You wonder how this war came about? Or how did we win? Or perhaps why was my punishment so harsh?" John simply gave a slight nod. And again the images shifted, showing a world, an obvious Forerunner world. "The answers are all one and the same: The Flood. As my wife told you before, of how your people were acting as fellow caretakers of the Galaxy, purging the Flood from wherever it may be found. You did not just burn the infestations, but entire worlds, no matter how slight the infection. Including Forerunner worlds and those under our care." Now the image of the Forerunner world changed, showing signs



of Flood infestation, Flood forms, both infected and pure, shambled aimlessly around the city. Massive tumors and growths hung from and covered entire structures. Then, a beam of energy burned the city, until the entire surface was naught but glass. Glassing, a chill went down the Spartan's spine at the revelation. Up until now, he along with the rest of humanity who knew of the Forerunners, assumed that glassing had been an act of the Forerunners the Covenant had been replicating. But instead, they have been following the footsteps of humanity's ancestors. The Didact's voice brought the Spartan back to reality, who had not noticed his shock. "We did not realize this, simply assuming that your people had chosen to forsake morality. And so we retaliated. This would eventually lead to your defeat. Humanity was already at war with the Flood, only to be assailed by the Forerunners. And we were completely oblivious to your true enemy. You would somehow defeat the Flood, without resorting to as desperate measures as we would. Only to fall against us. As for my punishment, the reason is simply, the angry of a mourning parent knows no bounds. All my children would die fighting against humanity. And my anger consumed me then." The images shown this time were blurred, hurried, as though the one recording them did not wish to see. But the screams were clearly heard. Of pain, sorrow and by the tone, for mercy. Not was given.

But the Spartan latched onto something the Didact said, "Wait, you said that we defeated the Flood? How?" When no answer was given, the Spartan looked towards the Didact directly, who had steeled his features before speaking in a calm tone that did not betray what regret he felt. "No one knows. Least, no Forerunner knew, but we know this. Somehow humanity found a cure for the Parasite, pushing it back until it retreated beyond the borders of our galaxy." Again the image changed, this time of humans charging Flood forms both in space and on the ground. Infection forms overwhelming warriors by sheer numbers, attempting to take a host, only to fail and be batted away. Worlds were purged clean without glassing, and Flood vessels were destroyed almost to the last. "A cure that was destroyed as you lost began to lose your war with us." Now the images of another burning human world, surrounded by ships of Forerunner make. "The rest I think, you know."

Slowly, light returned to the chamber as the images began to fade. A Human and Forerunner, both arguably the greatest warrior-servants ever of their race, looked upon each other's eyes. One processing what they had just seen, the other waiting for their decision.

### **\*\*Defying Gods and Angels\*\***

Back on the surface, Infinity was under siege. Multiple Storm Covenant warships were laying or coming to lay siege to the mighty vessel, from both the skies and on the ground. Under normal circumstances, this would have been an easy fight for the Infinity, but somehow the Covenant ships managed to make it unscathed, or at the very least, suffer less damages than the Infinity did. Roland had surmised that it was due to the smaller sizes of the ships that they focused on getting a comparative fraction battle ready than spreading their efforts throughout the entire fleet. Which meant that the Infinity's size was working against it as it would take a while for all systems to be back up to full.

Still that didn't mean the Infinity was defenseless. Enough of the

secondary, and tertiary weapon systems of the Infinity were back online that they could defend themselves. But the problem was that the shields were still down, and more and more of the Storm Covenant fleet was heading towards them. As of right now, a dozen cruisers, light and standard, were already here, and according to the scanners, another twenty-four ships, a mix of heavy corvettes, frigates and cruisers were on the way. Captain Del Rio was barking out orders on the bridge as he tried to manage against both the airborne forces and the incoming ground based forces approaching their position.

Whatever way one sliced it, the situation was looking grim. The sheer number of ships bearing down on them, coupled with the number of downed systems the Infinity had, it was going to be hell just trying to survive the battle, let alone win. The Spartan-IVs were trying their damned hardest to keep the Covenant away on the ground and they were successful to an extent but they were nowhere near as capable as their predecessors, the Spartan-IIIs and most were a far cry from the Spartan-IIs. Their capabilities and sheer numbers meant the Covenant were paying for every centimeter they took in blood and bodies but still the Storm was advancing, and that was only on the ground. In the skies, the Infinity had no air support. All of its frigates were trapped inside the Infinity itself, their launch bays blocked by the dirt beneath them. Whatever few fighters and gunships they had were taking out the smaller craft but outside of the Infinity's external guns, the Storm Covenant fleet had free reign.

On a mesa overlooking the Infinity, a Promethean Warrior, this one a Field Marshall, its carapace streaked with glowing energy, watched as the human warship was besieged. It raised its hard light blade into the air before waving forward. Soon disappearing in a orb of blue light.

Behind it, hundreds of Prometheans, knights and commanders stood before copying their Field Marshall. The humans had arrived, and it was time to both test them and protect them.

**\*\*Defying Gods and Angels\*\***

Let it be known that it is not an easy feat to stun an AI, especially one such as Cortana, into a stupor. And that was what the Librarian had just done. The Forerunner had shared a similar revelation with Cortana that the Didact had with John. Not only that, but she had gone beyond what her husband had shared.

And that was not all that she had shared. "How? How is that even possible?" Cortana was dumbfounded by what she had been told, which was no small feat for an AI, even more so for one of Cortana's caliber. "What you propose, it's not possible."

The Librarian smiled, "Oh to be young again. You still have much to learn my dear ancilla. Your Spartan, and all others like him, are the fruits of a thousand lifetimes of planning. Everything that makes them who they are, was planned long ago."

"But that doesn't make sense!" Cortana all but shot back, "You're saying that what allowed the Spartans to be augmented, my Spartans to be augmented, was because of you? Forgive me if I don't believe you."

"Then you are allowed to do so. But that will not change the fact that the very reasons why the John and his siblings had the potential to be augmented was the gene-songs placed within their ancestors. The gene-songs that would grant them the knowledge to use virtually all of our technology. Regardless if they knew of its purpose. The gene-song is the very thing that marks them as our Reclaimers."

"But why? Why only a few of us?" Cortana stopped talking as she realized the Librarian had ceased in her work.

Now the Librarian stepped away, her work finished. The code compiling itself again, Cortana 'shuddered' as the repairs surged over her systems, pushing her into standby mode to compensate for the Forerunner code. As she began to feel herself slow down, she heard the Librarian speak again, "Look back upon your own history Cortana, and you will find your answer."

A/N: So...thoughts on my explanation of the Spartans, Reclaimers and Forerunners? Please let me know in the reviews. Also, sorry for the short chapters, but this is the best I can do with this story. Either its short chapters but more regular updates or potentially longer but low grade chapters.

Read and review.

A/N: Also, the thing about Humanity and Forerunners being made by the Precursors and then the Precursors choosing Humanity as their successor. Apparently that's canon. Check the wikia. For Halo: Silentium., Then, take a look at my timeline for Alternate Past Uncertain Future Mk. II. Apparently, my fanon came out three months before the canon was published.

Also, the scene with humanity curing the flood, for those of you that know the real canon, yeah I know too. But the only one that did, is dead.

## 6. Chapter 5

Defying Gods and Angels

A/N: A bit OCC(Out Of Character) here, advance warning.

### Chapter 5

"Our DNA functions as an archive. It contains not only genetic instructions passed down from previous generations, but memories as well. The memories of our ancestors."

•Warren Vidic, Mid-21st century scientist, discredited for his ideas of "genetic memory". Vindicated in the 26th century.

Human and Forerunner looked upon the other. The latter waiting for judgement, the former processing what he just seen and been told. It seemed as though a conflict lost and forgotten eons ago was about to be reignited. The lack of empathy and emotion from the Spartan seemed to only encourage it. And the Ur-Didact did nothing. A lithany of thoughts and emotions ripped through the Spartan in a way he never thought possible. Rage, anger, and hate were emotions that were almost unknown to the Spartans. Even in the fight against the

Covenant and the Insurrection, John had almost been detached. Every death was to be avenged, every traitor captured or killed. But the emotions he felt now, were not the same. 'How many lives were lost? How many died that could have survived?' He thought. Though it all, the super-soldier didn't move. The only outward sign being a tightening of the fists.

The Ur-Didact simply waited. Realizing that the Spartan would not be speaking anytime soon, he turned around, facing away from the Spartan. "Would it help if I told you that I regretted my actions?" That one statement instantly grabbed the Spartan's attention? "That if I could turn back the suns and the stars, I would never have cast down your people?" John unclenched his fists, listening intently. "I admit, that my punishment was unfair and cruel. Taking away an entire people's achievements and accomplishments as retribution for their crimes. It was an action fueled by my hate and my despair." As though reading the human's mind, he said. "Do not be so surprised, warrior. I am as susceptible to my emotions and my grief as any sapient being. That was drove my actions that moment."

"Why would you regret your actions? You defeated your enemy, humiliated them, and made them pay for what they had done." John shot back with vitriol he never knew he had. "Do you regret it because you destroyed the only cure that existed against the Flood? Or that you struck us down before you could take it?"

"Do not think me to be so selfish, human." The Didact shot back. "Yes that is one of the reasons but not the only one. I regret my actions because they were cruel. That it was an act in violation of the Mantle itself! The Forerunners were supposed to be the protectors of the galaxy: watching over all those who lived within it. We were supposed to watch the races of the galaxy rise, and keep them safe. And what was my action when finding an equal? We cast them down and made them little more than beasts!" The hate and anger the Didact felt was present in each and every word. "Instead, when our peoples could have stood shoulder to shoulder against the Flood, we each stood alone."

John was surprised by the Didact's word and brutal honesty. The super-soldier didn't expect the apology or explanation, let alone the self-hate that came with it. But now he his unusual anger had dissipated, his normal clearheaded mind returned. Taking into consideration everything the Didact said, he gave his answer.

"I won't, or rather can't, forgive you for what you've done. If you hadn't, humanity would not have suffered at the hands of the Covenant as it did. And the only ones who could are dead now." The Spartan stepped forward, Light Rifle now in hand. "However, I have other questionsâ€¦"

"Then ask."

"The Domain, you said that you used it to learn of my exploits, but how?" John inquired. "I accessed a number of Terminals on the Halos and the Ark. But all of them said that the Domain was gone, destroyed by the firing of the Halos."

"That is a simpler answer than you would believe." The Ur-Didact began to elaborate, "When the Halo's fired, they did indeed take a considerable toll on the Domain. Severing its connection to all but a

handful of worlds and installations. The Halos were the hardest to be hit, for obvious reasons. In time, the Domain regained some of its strength, and regained connection with other worlds. But as it is now, it is still a shadow of its former self."

"And here?"

"My Cryptum was one of the few to never lose connection to the Domain, and as the sole user, I was given access to its entirety. As it regained its strength, I rejoined the Halos and the Ark with the Domain, but took precautions to ensure that it was not noticed."

"Why would you do such a thing?" Chief was starting to feel angry, considering the ramifications of the Ur-Didact's words. "If you had made yourself known on the First Halo ring, it could have changed everything, it could have--"

"And what would you have had me do Spartan? Trapped as I was in my Cryptum. You were barely aware of my kind at the time." The Didact countered. "Yet, perhaps you are right. But there is little point wallowing in the past. I--" He paused, "Apologies Spartan, but it seems we both have something more pressing to attend to." Before John could even process what he had been told, both Forerunner and Human faded in a display of light.

**\*\*Defying Gods and Angels\*\***

"Hold your position! Don't let them break through!" A Spartan-IV called out, directing the fireteam of marines. "Don't let the jackals get a phalanx up or we're done for!" Across from the fireteam, Storm Covenant rained down fire on their position: a rush made-foxhole with pre-fabricated portable barriers. It was a similar scene at many points around the down UNSC Infinity as it deployed all of its ground forces in an effort to keep the Storm Covenant from breaching and looting her. And it was a failing effort. At more than a dozen points across Infinity, the Storm Covenant were forcing their way into the vessel.

Absolutely nothing was being held back in the defense. Tanks, warthogs, pelicans and falcons, if it could kill the Covenant, chances were that it was being used. With the Infinity's outer defenses reduced to a handful of automated cannons, it was unable to stem the tide of reinforcements. Those on the ground and within the ship did their best to keep the Infinity Covenant-free, but they were losing ground. Even Spartan Commander Sarah Palmer was taking part in the defense.

"Hold them back! Don't let them get anywhere further in!" Palmer ordered, directing the Spartans and Marines with her. They were currently in one of the armory bays of the Infinity; attached to a secondary hangar bay. Wielding two M6-H series handguns, with lethal efficiency. Popping both heads and shields with stunning accuracy. Any foolish Elite that tried to charge and take her down soon found themselves flying through the air as Palmer literally flipped them before blowing their brains out their skulls with a 12.7 by 40mm surprise. Around her, most of her Spartans were standing their ground, along with some of the marines, but the floor was begin to grow slick with blood, both human and Covenant. "Damn it! Someone contact the bridge! We need reinforcements or we're going to lose the

position!"

As if summoned by her words, a dozen tiny spheres of blue light burst into existence between humans and Covenant. Immediately turning into blue discs and moving upwards, upon finishing their task what was left behind was a massive armored and mechanical warrior. One of the Spartans moved to aim for one of the strange machine but stopped seeing a 'hold' command from the Commander. Before anyone could react, the first one, which stood out thanks to its bright blue fins, jumped towards the Covenant, screaming in what eerily sounded like a human voice that was horribly distorted to all who heard it.

The Covenant warriors were unsure how to respond. A few of them had seen the Sentinels on the Halos, the Sacred Warriors of the Holy Rings. These machines before them shared similar designs, but were entirely unique as well. A Elite Fieldmaster, wearing gold colored armor stepped forward. "I am Fieldmaster Luro' Turalm, Follower of the Forerunners. Stand aside from the humans or we shall exterminate you along with them." By this time, the Fieldmaster was standing directly in front of the Forerunner machine, which was taller than the Elite by a head.

The Promethean Knight Commander didn't move, nor did any of the other Prometheans. Fins and flaps waved before settling every now and then, but they did not move otherwise. The tension in the air kept growing as the standoff continued. Humans on one side, Storm Covenant on the other, and Prometheans in the middle.

With the UNSC forces, someone whispered, "Hey, just what the hell is going on? Who are these guys?"

"I don't know. I'm just glad they just managed to get the hingeheads to stop shooting."

"Yeah, but just how long that going to last?" Someone questioned. "If you ask me, its only a matter of time until-URK!" The trooper fell as their head was perforated by a beam rifle shot, the particle beam cutting through flesh and bone with no effort.

"Ah shit they got Jones!" Before the UNSC could open fire, the Prometheans roared. The sheer volume causing the closest of Covenant stumble back in shock. The Fieldmaster grasped the handle of his energy sword, intent of cleaving the Heretical machine before him, when the world suddenly began to spin. Feeling a loss of control as his view spun, seeing his own body as he hit the ground.

The Fieldmaster had been decapitated by the Promethean Commander, and with that, the rest of the Prometheans charged forth, cleaving into the Covenant forces with abandon. Despite their skills, the Covenant were not match against war machines designed to fight the Flood, dying in droves as Hardlight shots and blades did their terrible work.

The humans present watched, dumbstruck. "Damn...I'm REALLY glad these things are on our side." Murmurs and nods of assent were shared by those present.

On board the Infinity, Del Rio and Lasky watched dumbstruck as Forerunner machines teleported onto the Infinity. The smaller drones creating turrets out of nothing but light that were quickly laying

waste to all within range, the dog-like mechs climbing on virtually every surface and peppering everything they could reach with hardlight rounds, and the larger machines just destroying any Covenant the former missed. Even Hunters found themselves being vaporized by turrets and massive cannons.

"Roland, just what the hell are these things?" Del Rio demanded.

Roland's Avatar appeared on the holo-table: a world-war II era fighter/bomber pilot. "Unknown captain. Obviously of Forerunner origin but beyond that I-wait a second."

"What is it Roland?" Lasky asked, the Executive officer was being much more level headed than the Commanding officer, which was an embarrassment for Del Rio to say the least.

"Not sure commander, but I'm getting data bursts from...this can't be right!"

"Roland, just tell us."

"It's these flashes of light, from whenever one of those machines are downed." To show what he was talking about, a live feed of Covenant engaging the Forerunner machines was being shown. One of them took a beam rifle blast straight through the head and began disintegrating a dazzling display of blue petals. "What you're seeing isn't atomization, not really. It's more of a data burst, and from what I've intercepted, these things are called 'Prometheans, warrior-servants of the Ur-Didact'."

"And just what is an 'Ur-Didact'?" Del Rio asked, as sections of the ship began reporting an all clear signal. "Or a warrior-servant for that matter."

"I'm guessing that a warrior-servant is the Forerunner term for a soldier, sir." Lasky answered. "As for this Ur-Didact, it sounds like a title or rank."

"Peh, well as grateful as I am for this 'Didact's' help." Del Rio waved off. "I'd be more grateful if he could help get my ship off the bloody ground."

A voice from behind the captain rumbled, "That can quite easily be arranged." Lasky and marines on the bridge turned to where the voice had come from, weapons raised. Only to nearly drop them at the sight of not just the nine-foot tall Forerunner, but Sierra-117 standing beside him. "As I told the Spartan before, there is much that you and your people must be told."

To the ignorance of all those present, a Legacy was returning to the Milky Way. Returning from another Galaxy beyond. And this time, they would be victorious.

"A legacy is more than history or achievements. A legacy is the next generation left behind, to take up the mantle from the last. Without a new generation to carry on the torch, all that is left is history and artifacts."

-Forthencho, Lord of Admirals. Told to his children during the

Human-Flood War.

A/N: Well, sorry it took me so long to update this guys, but when I first started this story, I did so without any real plot or plans. Aside from that, I wasn't sure exactly what to write and needed a few solutions to explain how canon was maintained despite my keeping the Domain alive. I am now looking for a co-writer to this story, as I seem to do my best when writing with another or others. Let me know if you want to be a part of creating this story.

As always, please review and let me know what you think.

A reward to be determined for anyone who correctly determines who I am referring to with the last few lines of this chapter.

End  
file.